



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

The Importance of Investing in the National Institutes of Health May 2009

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) continues to serve as the driving force in this nation's search for ever-greater understanding of the mechanisms of human health and disease. As the primary federal agency responsible for conducting and supporting medical research, NIH is the foundation of medical knowledge that fosters innovation and improves health and quality of life through new and better diagnostics, prevention strategies, and more effective treatments. NIH-funded research also contributes to the nation's economic strength by creating skilled, high-paying jobs; new products and industries; and improved technologies.

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research thanks and commends Congress for including the extraordinary investment in medical research through NIH as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) [P.L. 111-5] as well as the \$938 million increase in NIH funding in the Omnibus Appropriations Act for FY 2009 [P.L. 111-8]. The affirmation that science is the key to a better future is a strategic step forward. In these challenging economic times, increasing our nation's investment in NIH research is one of the best ways we can work together to improve the health of our nation -- fiscally as well as physically.

The nearly 300 patient groups, scientific societies, research organizations and companies that comprise the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research recommend at least a \$2.1 billion (7 percent) increase for NIH in FY 2010.

Sustained, Real Growth in NIH Funding is Essential for Continued Progress

- The recent increase in support for NIH should not be an isolated event, but rather the first step toward a renewed national commitment to sustained, predictable growth in NIH funding over the long term.
- History has shown us that "boom and bust" cycles of support for research funding have resulted in lost opportunities for science and delayed hope for patients and their families.
- During her Senate confirmation hearing, HHS Secretary Sebelius noted, "A plan to achieve sustained growth of the NIH budget is much needed so that 'feast or famine' can be avoided. President Obama's pledge to increase funding for basic science research will enable the U.S. to regain its leadership in the area of biomedical research, expand training opportunities for the next generation of scientists, and stimulate local economies to create jobs."

Investment in NIH Improves Health

- NIH-funded research has led to progress in the fight against heart disease, cancer, and AIDS, among many others, and have helped save lives and avoid unnecessary health expenditures.
- In the past 40+ years, NIH funded research has successfully reduced the mortality and morbidity of once acute and lethal conditions by finding ways to improve treatment -- even in late stages of disease.

Investment in NIH is Transforming Health Care

- Medical research is the key to transform medicine from the model of curative health care, where interventions occur late in the natural history of a disease, to a preemptive model in which the onset of disease is significantly delayed or even never allowed to develop.
- Health care costs will not be tempered unless we accelerate the discovery of transformative ways of practicing medicine – which can only happen through research.

Investment in NIH Produces Jobs Nationwide

- More than 83 percent of NIH's funding is awarded through almost 50,000 competitive, peer-reviewed grants and contracts to more than 350,000 researchers at over 3,000 universities, medical schools, teaching hospitals, and other research institutions in every state.
- Acting NIH Director Kington testified to Congress in March that “on average, every NIH grant supports 6-7 in-part or full scientific jobs.”
- The improvements in better health and quality of life that result from medical research will also improve our nation's productivity and economic vigor over the long term.

Investment in NIH Produces State and Local Benefits

- According to a 2008 Families USA study, money from NIH in 2007 to medical schools, universities, and research institutions generated \$50.5 billion in new state business activity through the increased output of goods and services – more than two dollars of business activity for every dollar from NIH. This new activity included over 350,000 jobs, with average salaries of \$52,000 per year, well above the national average.

Investment in NIH is Essential in the Modern Innovation Based, Global Economy

- Opportunities for discoveries that translate to improved health for our citizens have never been greater. For example, the recent call for proposals for the new Challenge Grants generated more than 15,000 applications.

- NIH-funded research ensures that our nation remains at the forefront of medical insight and discovery. NIH research produces a steady stream of innovations and talented researchers that flow into U.S. industries and make them more competitive.
- Without increased NIH funding the scientific pipeline is in danger of breaking as younger investigators find it difficult to get grants to explore new ideas.

Investment in NIH Means Hope

- Increasing support for medical research will provide new hope to all Americans who suffer from disease and disability – which has a major impact on quality of life.